



A year ago Kevin McCarthy was booted as House speaker. Mike Johnson is trying to avoid that fate

By LISA MASCARO
AP Congressional Correspondent

WASHINGTON (AP) — One year since Kevin McCarthy was booted from the House speaker's office after Congress voted in a bipartisan way to prevent a federal government shutdown, the new House Speaker Mike Johnson finds himself courting, but so far avoiding, a similar political fate. Johnson is leading the House this week to vote on legislation to fund the government and ensure no interruption in federal services, but he's similarly abandoning demands from his own hard-right Republican colleagues and relying on Democratic votes and House Democratic Leader Hakeem Jeffries to push the package to bipartisan approval.



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., pauses for a final question as he leaves a news conference at the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2024.

Continued on Page 2

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A year ago Kevin McCarthy was booted as House speaker. Mike Johnson is trying to avoid that fate

Continued from Front

While Johnson appears to be in no imminent threat of being ousted — the way McCarthy lost his position in a historic vote last fall when eight hardline Republicans engineered a motion to vacate the speaker — the new leader's ability to hold on to the speaker's gavel for the long term is not at all certain.

"It's a tough job," said McCarthy, who is now retired from Congress and watching from the sidelines.

The government funding vote provides a notable capstone to what has been an extraordinary and tumultuous session of Congress with the House Republican majority that swept to power in January 2023, as lawmakers now prepare to face voters.

The outcome of November's election will determine the White House and control of Congress, and may very well decide Johnson's political future. Colleagues are weighing whether to keep Johnson or try someone else as their leader ahead of internal party voting expected later in November after the election.

"The vast majority support Speaker Johnson — it's a shame that we've got like 10 people that always hold this over his head," said Rep. Don Bacon of Nebraska, among the more centrist Republicans.

"He's a good man. He's got a great heart," Bacon said. "I think he's learned a lot this year."

On the job for the past 11 months, Johnson had been an unlikely choice for the speaker's gavel. The Louisiana congressman was a relatively unknown low-rung party leader, first elected to office in 2016 alongside Donald Trump, when he emerged as Republicans' last-ditch consensus choice to replace McCarthy.

Republicans had fought behind closed doors over who should become their new speaker after they



Speaker of the House Mike Johnson, R-La., meets with reporters after a closed-door caucus with fellow Republicans, at the Capitol in Washington, Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2024.

Associated Press

took the historic step of ousting McCarthy — passing over their Majority Leader Steve Scalise, their GOP Whip Tom Emmer and hard-right Judiciary Chairman Jim Jordan, among others — before Johnson stepped up and won support, with Trump's blessing. Johnson, a lawyer, had led one of Trump's main legal cases challenging President Joe Biden's victory in the 2020 election and could play a prominent role in the 2024 election amid potential legal challenges to the outcome.

As the new speaker, Johnson inherited a bitterly divided House GOP majority and worked quickly to pick up the pieces. He cleaned out the speaker's staff at the Capitol, moved in his own team — and closely aligned himself with Trump, throwing his support behind the indicted former president's bid to retake the White House.

Johnson prioritized several House initiatives, from the Biden impeachment inquiry to the House impeachment of Homeland Security Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, that aligned tightly with

Trump's agenda.

But the annual spending fights over the federal budget always loomed over Johnson's term. With the Sept. 30 deadline signaling the end of the fiscal year, the House GOP's ultra-conservative flank agitated for the speaker to push for spending cuts, even if it meant throwing the government into a shutdown. Trump urged the House Republicans to take a hard-line approach.

"I wish he would take Trump's advice," said Rep. Ralph Norman, R-South Carolina, a member of the hard-right House Freedom Caucus, who said of Johnson: "He's risk averse."

But with a very slim majority that leaves Johnson with just a few votes to spare on any issue, he needs almost unanimity from his own ranks to pass legislation over the objections of Democrats. He already survived one attempt from Rep. Marjorie Taylor Greene to boot him from office this year.

Ahead of Wednesday's expected vote on the spending plan, Johnson defended his decision, saying it would have been "political

malpractice" to lead the government into a federal shutdown weeks before the election.

Johnson said he had tried to run what he called "the best play" he could, which was attaching a bill called the SAVE Act, which would prevent immigrants who are in the U.S. without legal status from voting in the nationwide elections, even though that's already the law and experts say it rarely happens.

But that approach from the speaker failed, voted down by more than a dozen Republicans along with almost all Democrats.

A similar dynamic played out on several other bills to fund the various agencies when lawmakers opposed the steep budget cuts or the specific policy provisions as too extreme.

"So we have to go with the next available thing," Johnson said at his weekly press conference Tuesday.

Johnson described the temporary government funding bill, which will keep operations going until Dec. 20, as bare bones, with no add-ons — except for \$231 million for the U.S. Service

in the aftermath of the two assassination attempts on Trump this election season. He insisted he and Trump are "on the same page" on the strategy and have spoken "at great length" about the situation. And Johnson vowed House would hold the line against extra spending next time, in December, when the next round of funding will be needed.

"There's no daylight between us," Johnson said of Trump.

One key difference between the situation McCarthy faced and this week's vote is that last year Congress was also considering funding to help Ukraine buy weapons as it battles the Russian invasion, something Trump and the hard-right flank did not support, and it was eventually dropped from the final bill.

Extra war funding is not included in this week's temporary bill either, but Ukraine President Volodymyr Zelenskyy is expected on Capitol Hill later this week as he presses Congress to ensure ongoing support.

"I actually think Kevin McCarthy would have done much better," said Rep. Thomas Massie, R-Ky., an ultraconservative who opposes most of the spending bills.

Massie said he thinks "the only way Mike Johnson gets reelected speaker is he gets a lifeline from Trump, should Trump win the White House."

As for the eight House Republicans who dislodged McCarthy, they've had their own political journeys since then — one, Rep. Bob Good of Virginia, a former chairman of the Freedom Caucus, lost his primary bid for reelection.

McCarthy, meanwhile, is not necessarily eying any comeback, but fundraising for the House majority and showering Republicans in tight reelection contests with money to run their campaigns — and opposing those who crossed him. □

Department of Justice sues Visa, alleges the card issuer monopolizes debit card markets

By **MAE ANDERSON**
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — The U.S. Justice Department has filed an antitrust lawsuit against Visa, alleging that the financial services behemoth uses its size and dominance to stifle competition in the debit card market, costing consumers and businesses billions of dollars. The complaint filed Tuesday says San Francisco-based Visa penalizes merchants and banks who don't use Visa's own payment processing technology to process debit transactions, even though alternatives exist. Visa earns an incremental fee from every transaction processed on its network.

According to the DOJ's complaint, 60% of debit transactions in the United States run on Visa's debit network, allowing it to charge over \$7 billion in fees each year for processing those transactions.

"We allege that Visa has unlawfully amassed the power to extract fees that far exceed what it could charge in a competitive market," said Attorney General Merrick B. Garland in a statement. "Merchants and banks pass along those costs to consumers, either by raising prices or reducing quality or service. As a result, Visa's unlawful conduct affects not just the price of one thing but the price of nearly everything."

In a statement, Julie Rottenberg, Visa's general counsel, said the lawsuit doesn't take into account the "ever expanding universe of companies offering new ways to pay for goods and services." "Today's lawsuit ignores the reality that Visa is just one of many competitors in a debit space that is growing, with entrants who are thriving," Rottenberg said. She added the lawsuit is "meritless" and the company will defend itself "vigorously."

The Biden administration has aggressively gone after U.S. companies that it says act like middlemen,



A Visa card is displayed on May 15, 2024, in Portland, Ore.

Associated Press

such as Ticketmaster parent Live Nation and the real estate software company RealPage, accusing them of burdening Americans with nonsensical fees and anticompetitive behavior. The administration has also brought charges of monopolistic behavior against technology giants such as Apple and Google.

"In some of the Justice Department's antitrust enforcement actions, the harm caused by the alleged illegal conduct is more visible: higher prices for air travel, for concert tickets, for smartphones," Garland said during a news conference in Washington on Tuesday. "The harmful effects of Visa's alleged anticompetitive conduct is less visible, but they are no less harmful."

According to the DOJ complaint, filed in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York, Visa leverages the vast number of transactions on its network to impose volume commitments on merchants and their banks, as well as on financial institutions that issue debit cards. That makes it difficult for merchants to use alternatives, such as lower-cost or smaller payment processors, instead of Visa's payment processing technology, without incurring what

DOJ described as "disloyalty penalties" from Visa.

The DOJ said Visa also stifled competition by paying to enter into partnership agreements with potential competitors. In 2020, the DOJ sued to block the company's \$5.3 billion purchase of financial technology startup Plaid, calling it a monopolistic takeover of a potential competitor to Visa's ubiquitous payments network. That acquisition was eventually later called off. Visa previously disclosed the Justice Department was investigating the company in 2021, saying in a regulatory filing it was cooperating with a DOJ investigation into its debit practices. □

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FBI: Son of suspect in Trump assassination attempt arrested on child sexual abuse images charges

By **ALANNA DURKIN RICHER**
Associated Press

WASHINGTON (AP) — The son of the man suspected in the assassination attempt in Florida against former President Donald Trump has been arrested on federal charges of possessing child sexual abuse images. Oran Alexander Routh was arrested this week after authorities searched his Greensboro, North Carolina, home "in connection with an investigation unrelated to child exploitation," and found hundreds of files depicting child sexual abuse, an FBI agent said in court papers.

Investigators who seized multiple electronic devices found videos sent to Oran Routh in July as well as chats from a messaging application commonly used by people who share child sexual abuse material, the FBI agent said. He faces two charges of possessing and receiving child sexual abuse material and is expected to appear later Tuesday in federal court in North Carolina. There was no attorney listed for Oran Routh in court papers. Phone messages left for relatives of Oran Routh



The seal of the Department of Justice, Aug. 1, 2023, at the Department of Justice in Washington. **Associated Press**

were not immediately returned.

Oran Routh's father, Ryan Wesley Routh, has been charged with federal gun offenses in connection to the attempted assassination at Trump's Florida golf course earlier this month. Prosecutors have indicated much more serious attempted assassination charges are coming.

Oran Routh's arrest was first

reported Tuesday by ABC News.

A federal judge on Monday agreed with Justice Department prosecutors that Ryan Routh should remain locked up while he awaits trial in his case.

Prosecutors have said Ryan Routh left behind a note detailing his plans to kill the former president and kept in his car a handwritten list of dates and venues

where Trump was to appear. The note describing Routh's plans was placed in a box that he dropped off months earlier at the home of an unidentified person who did not open it until after Ryan Routh's arrest, prosecutors said.

Ryan Routh is currently charged with illegally possessing his gun in spite of multiple felony convictions, including two charges of

possessing stolen goods in 2002 in North Carolina, and with possessing a firearm with an obliterated serial number.

But a prosecutor said in court Monday that they would pursue additional charges before a grand jury, accusing him of having tried to "assassinate a major political candidate" charges that would warrant life in prison in the event of a conviction.

It is common for prosecutors to file more easily provable charges as an immediate placeholder before adding more significant allegations as the case proceeds.

Ryan Routh was arrested Sept. 15 after a Secret Service agent who was scoping the Trump International Golf Club for potential security threats saw a partially obscured man's face and the barrel of a semiautomatic rifle, aimed directly at the former president.

The agent fired at Routh, who sped away before being stopped by officials in a neighboring county, leaving behind a loaded rifle, digital camera, a backpack and a reusable shopping bag that was hanging from a chain-link fence. □

Capitol rioter mistakenly released from prison after appeals court ruling, prosecutors say

By **MICHAEL KUNZELMAN**
Associated Press

The federal Bureau of Prisons mistakenly released an Iowa man from custody

before he finished serving his 30-month sentence for storming the Senate chamber during a mob's attack on the U.S. Capitol, Justice

Department prosecutors said in a court filing this week.

Leo Christopher Kelly of Cedar Rapids was freed last Thursday after an appeals court agreed to throw out one of his convictions stemming from the Jan. 6, 2021, riot.

But prosecutors believe Kelly's release was a mistake because he only served 11 months of his 30-month sentence. In a court filing Monday, they asked U.S. District Judge Royce Lamberth for a hearing to address Kelly's release.

The Bureau of Prisons told The Associated Press that Kelly was "inadvertently released" last week after a "misinterpretation of a

court order." The bureau's statement doesn't elaborate on the reason for the error, but it says that Kelly, 39, reported to a probation officer "as instructed" and remains free while awaiting a resentencing hearing.

Prosecutors also are asking the judge to schedule a hearing for resentencing now that Kelly's only felony conviction has been tossed by the federal appeals court for the District of Columbia circuit.

In May 2023, a jury convicted Kelly of all seven counts in his indictment.

One of his convictions was for a charge that he obstructed an official proceeding, the Jan. 6 joint session of Congress for cer-

tifying President Joe Biden's electoral victory over Donald Trump.

In June, however, the U.S. Supreme Court limited the government's use of that obstruction charge. The justices ruled 6-3 that the charge of obstructing an official proceeding must include proof that defendants tried to tamper with or destroy documents.

After the ruling, prosecutors and defense attorney Nicholas Smith joined in asking the appeals court to vacate Kelly's obstruction conviction.

His remaining convictions were for misdemeanor offenses. Smith declined to comment Tuesday on prosecutors' filing. □



In this image from Senate Television, Leo Christopher Kelly, walks on the floor in the Senate chamber Jan. 6, 2021, at the U.S. Capitol in Washington.

Associated Press

North Korea vows response to U.S. submarine's visit to South Korea

By HYUNG-JIN KIM

Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea (AP) —

The powerful sister of North Korean leader Kim Jong Un vowed Tuesday to boost the country's nuclear war capability and take other steps to protest the recent arrival of a nuclear-powered U.S. submarine in South Korea.

North Korea has repeatedly vowed to expand its nuclear arsenal, but the latest threat by Kim Yo Jong came after North Korea dialed up regional tensions by unveiling a uranium-enrichment facility and testing a new ballistic missile earlier this month.

In a statement carried by state media, Kim Yo Jong said that the submarine's visit "clearly reveals the frantic military and strategic attempt of the U.S." She said North Korea's nuclear war deterrent must be bolstered "both in quality and quantity continuously and limitlessly" in response.

"The U.S. strategic assets

will never find their resting place in the region of the Korean Peninsula," she said. "We will continue to inform that all the ports and military bases of the ROK are not safe places." ROK stands for the Republic of Korea, South Korea's formal name.

Her comments suggested North Korea may test-fire a missile whose range covers a South Korean site where the U.S. submarine is docked, some observers say.

South Korea's military said the USS Vermont, a nuclear-powered and fast-attack submarine, arrived at the southeastern South Korean port city of Busan on Monday to take on supplies and allow its crew to rest.

Temporary deployments of powerful U.S. military assets like aircraft carriers, nuclear-powered submarines and bombers to South Korea are not unusual, but Washington has boosted them over the last year in a show of force against North Korea's evolving nuclear threats.



The USS Vermont, a nuclear-powered and fast-attack submarine, enters a naval base in Busan, South Korea, Monday, Sept. 23, 2024.

Associated Press

Pyongyang often responds furiously to such visits, calling them proof of hostile intentions, and reacts with missile tests.

On Sept. 13, North Korea's state media published photos of a secretive facility to enrich uranium for nuclear weapons. It was North Ko-

rea's first unveiling of a uranium-enrichment facility since it showed one at the country's main Yongbyon nuclear complex to visiting American scholars in 2010. Last week, North Korea tested a newly built ballistic missile designed to carry what it calls "a 4.5-ton super-large conventional warhead" and a modified

cruise missile. Since late May, North Korea has also floated thousands of trash-carrying balloons toward South Korea in a Cold War-style psychological campaign, prompting South Korea to restart anti-Pyongyang propaganda loudspeaker broadcasts at border areas. □

Burkina Faso's ruling junta claims foiling an attempt to destabilize the country

OUAGADOUGOU, Burkina Faso (AP) —

Burkina Faso's ruling junta said it thwarted an attempt to destabilize the African country "with the help of foreign powers." A transitional government has been running the West African country after the military seized power in 2022, capitalizing on popular discontent with previous democratically elected governments over security issues. Growing attacks by extremists linked to al-Qaida and the Islamic State group have devastated Burkina

Faso where thousands have been killed and more than 2 million people displaced while pushing tens of thousands to the brink of starvation.

The junta had set a goal to conduct an election in July to return the country to democratic rule, but four months ago it extended its transition term for five more years.

Burkina Faso's Security Minister Mahamadou Sana said on national television Monday night that "persons residing in Ivory Coast have been

involved in subversive activities against our country."

Sana claimed an elaborate three-phased plot was devised by some Burkina Faso civilians and servicemen living abroad who paid and trained armed groups to conduct attacks. He said the first phase of their supposed plan was the jihadi attack that killed at least 100 people in central Burkina Faso last month. The second phase, he said, was planned attacks on the presidential palace, a military drone base, and an airport and the last phase was attacks near the Ivory Coast borders. Sana said the last two phases were prevented. Sana didn't provide evidence for his claims and they couldn't be independently verified.

The minister accused junta opponents, including the leader of the Jan. 2022 coup, two former government ministers, two journalists as well as Western intelligence of plotting the destabilization attempt. The current military junta promised disgruntled citizens upon coming to power to provide more security.

However, it has struggled to end Burkina Faso's security

challenges and humanitarian crisis. □



A mural reading "remain vigilant and mobilised" is seen in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, Wednesday March 1, 2023, in a region shaken by extremist uprisings and military coups.

Associated Press



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U.S. company accuses Mexico of expropriating its property on the Caribbean coast

MEXICO CITY (AP) — An American quarry company said Tuesday the Mexican government carried out a de-facto expropriation of its properties on Mexico's Caribbean coast.

Mexico's Interior Department issued a decree late Monday declaring the firm's seaport and quarries to be a natural protected area, in effect prohibiting the company's activities on its own land.

President Andrés Manuel López Obrador had previously threatened to expropriate the property and later offered to buy it for about \$385 million, saying at the time he wanted to turn it into a tourist attraction.

Alabama-based Vulcan Materials said in a statement Tuesday that the move violates the U.S.-Mexico-Canada free trade agreement. It said the measure formed part of "a series of threats and actions by the current administration against our operations."

"The expropriation of land and the seaport belonging to our company is another escalation and another violation of Mexico's obligations under trade agreements," the statement said. "This illegal measure will have a long-term paralyzing effect on trade and investment relations between Mexico and the United States."



Mexican President Andres Manuel Lopez Obrador meets with his security cabinet at the National Place in Mexico City, Aug. 2, 2024.

Associated Press

The decree published in the official gazette shows a strangely patterned nature reserve that follows exactly some of the company's property lines.

While the decree states the purpose of the park is to protect local animal and plant species, in fact the seaport and stone quarries are very disturbed areas, do not much resemble a nature reserve and would add little to that effort.

Moreover, the decree comes after López Obrador's administration cut down tens of thousands of trees in a broad swath through native jungle

to build a tourist train line not far from the stone quarries.

The company, which was already involved in a dispute resolution panel complaint against the Mexican government, said Tuesday it would use "all available legal channels" to fight the new decree. In June the American company rejected the Mexican president's buy-out offer, saying it "substantially undervalues our assets."

In papers filed on the case in an international arbitration panel, Vulcan Materials valued the almost 6,000-acre (2,400-hectare) property, located just south of the resort

town of Playa del Carmen, at \$1.9 billion.

The Mexican president has in the past threatened to expropriate the extensive property, claiming the pits the company has dug to extract crushed limestone have damaged the fragile system of underground rivers and caves in the area.

But Vulcan Materials rejected the charge at that time. "Our operations have not adversely affected underground caves, cenotes or archaeological sites. In fact, we have mapped, protected and preserved these valuable resources,"

the company said in a statement.

Instead, the company alleged that some other quarries in the area have been operating unlawfully. "Unlike other quarrying sites that have been operating unlawfully to supply the Mayan Train, our operations were duly permitted," the company said.

The Mayan Train is a pet project of López Obrador to build a tourist train around the Yucatan peninsula. Activists, cave divers and archaeologist say the project has damaged the caves, which hold some of the oldest human remains in North America.

López Obrador has said in the past that the most attractive part of the property was the company's freight shipping dock — the only deep port on the coast's mainland — which he previously said he wanted to turn into a dock for cruise ships.

López Obrador has also said he wants to use the flooded pits that the company dug out of hundreds of acres of the limestone soil as "swimming pools" or an "ecotourism" area that would be operated as a concession by a private operator.

However, the huge quarry pits are inhabited by crocodiles, which are a protected species in Mexico. □

U.S. Navy replenishment ship operating in Mideast was damaged after refueling warships, officials say



This handout photo from the U.S. Navy shows the Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler USNS Big Horn sailing alongside the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln on Sept. 11, 2024, at an undisclosed location at sea in the Middle East.

Associated Press

By **JON GAMBRELL and TARA COPP**
Associated Press
DUBAI, United Arab Emir-

ates (AP) — A U.S. Navy replenishment ship operating in the Middle East sustained damage and the cause

was under investigation, officials said Tuesday.

The USNS Big Horn was damaged after it resupplied the USS Abraham Lincoln aircraft carrier strike group. It remained in the region amid heightened tensions over the Israel-Hamas war and Israel's ongoing strikes targeting Hezbollah in Lebanon.

A U.S. Navy official, speaking on condition of anonymity to discuss matters yet to be made public, declined to elaborate on where the damage took place. A photo released by the U.S. military dated Sept. 5 showed sailors aboard

the Lincoln receiving supplies from the Big Horn, while another on Sept. 11 showed the Big Horn alongside the Lincoln. The Lincoln is patrolling the Arabian Sea.

The official said the Big Horn's crew was safe and there was no sign of an oil leak from the vessel.

Another U.S. official, who spoke on condition of anonymity for the same reason, said the vessel was being supported by private tugboats to head into a port and an assessment of the damage was still ongoing. Rumors about the Big Horn's condition began circulat-

ing early Tuesday after images posted to a website tracking shipping called Captain showed flooding purportedly on board the Henry J. Kaiser-class fleet replenishment oiler. The website described the Big Horn as having "ran aground ... and partially flooded off the coast of Oman."

Though the Lincoln is powered by a nuclear reactor, its strike group has vessels powered by fossil fuel that need to be resupplied at sea. The aircraft aboard the Lincoln also need jet fuel. The Big Horn and other ships like it also provide other supplies. □

Did you know about...?

The history and meaning of the Aruban florin

(Oranjestad)—Aruba Today is proud to officially introduce a new segment called Did you know about...?, where we dive into some (historical) facts of Aruba, its culture and way of living. In this first edition, we look back at the Aruban florin: its history, design and symbolism.

In Aruba, we know the 5, 10, 25 and 50 cent coins, along with the 1 and 5 Florin coin. Aruban Florin bills include the 10, 25, 50, 100, and rarely, the 200 bills. In Papiamentu we call our currency Florin, but the umbrella term for money is placa. Cents are called cen (pronounced: seng), both in the singular and plural form. Most coins are circular and their size depend on their worth. However, the 50 cent coin is easily recognizable by their square shape, as is the 5 Florin coin by their golden color. Every coin has the Aruban emblem carved on it, with the other side displaying the worth of the coin. The bigger 1 and 5 florin coins, however, contain the carving of the emblem on one side, while displaying the side profile of the Dutch king, Willem-Alexander, on the other side. When his mother, Princess Beatrix, was reigning queen, it was her profile that was carved on the two coins.

Outdated Aruban coins and their names

In the past, Aruban coins had distinctive names and also varied in worth. For example, a 5-cent coin was once called Dos placa; 10-cent coins were called debchi; 25-cent coins were called diez placa and the 50-cent coin was once called Yotin (pronounced: jo-teen). We also used a distinctive coins worth 2 ½ cents, called placa too. However, this last coin is no longer in use and has become a relic of Aruban money. Back then, the 5-Florin coin used to also be square, but now it is circular.

Aruban bills: their design and symbolism

The Aruban Florin collection contains a variation of colorful bills, displaying incredibly detailed and beautiful designs that tell the story of Aruba on a single piece of paper.

Prior to 2019, the Aruban Florin bills were relatively simpler in design compared to now, but still included beautiful designs and colors, often depicting local animals. These past designs were made by the Aruban



artist Everino Fingal in 1990 up to 2019. Between 1990 and 1993, the 5 Florin coin was a bill. The Fingal designs also included a 500-Florin bill, which has now been discontinued.

In 2019, the Central Bank of Aruba commissioned a new design of the Aruba Florin bills, this time selecting artist and former art teacher, Nigel Matthew, to present his new design. Matthew kept the tradition of including local animals and the familiar colors on the bills. However, he included additional designs that represent the Aruban culture and link to the Indigenous inhabitants that were the first to set foot on the island.

Current design and symbolism 10 florin

On the 10-florin bill, you can see a Turtuga blanco (white turtle). The blue color symbolizes the blue Caribbean Sea. You can also see the ruins of the Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins, a coral motif, and the symbols of Cas Floria (traditional Aruban house design) with a piece of mosaic.

25 florin

On this orange bill, you can see an Aruban medicinal plant called Shoshoro. The birds Trupiaal, Shoco, rock drawings, and the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic are also depicted. There is also

a Purun di ceramica (clay pot), in reference to the relics left behind by our indigenous ancestors.

50 florin

On this bill, we see the Cododo (blue lizard found on the ABC islands), Cangreu di tera (land crab), Willem III Tower, and again the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, as well as a beach plant called Banana di rif. The colors are pink/purple.

100 florin

This bill is green in color, representing nature. Here we see the Yuwana (Iguana), Aloe, Toteki (lizard), the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, and a dance group performing the Baile di cinta (folkloric dance with silk ribbons).

200 florin

There is another bill with a value of 200 dollars. The brown color symbolizes the earth of Aruba. Here we see the Dornasol and the Warawara—both local birds, along with the symbols of Cas Floria with a piece of mosaic, the Tuna cactus plant, and the Caha di orgel (folkloric instrument, used for many traditional songs).

Extra fact:

the word “florin” supposedly is named after the Italian city of Florence or it's a reference to the Italian word “florino”, both explanations related to historical Italian currencies.□

Source: Placa, placa, placa by the National Library of Aruba



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Phase 4 of reconstruction project in the High Rise Hotel area continues *Parking is not possible on the road*

ORANJESTAD – Recently, the Department of Public Works (DOW) gave an update regarding the reconstruction project in the High Rise Hotel area, which is now in phase four.

The Department informed

that this phase will last approximately eleven weeks, because it covers a longer distance than previous phases and there are more pipes that need to be installed.

The Department is also reminding people who intend

to go to the area that the area is currently under construction, and access is not available for unauthorized persons. While it is possible to park cars on the side of the road, the Department emphasizes that it is not allowed to park on the road,



and requests users to keep this in mind. □

Aruba Tourism Authority honored loyal visitors at Marriott's Aruba Surf Club!

The Aruba Tourism Authority recently had the great pleasure of recognizing Goodwill Ambassadors of Aruba. The honorees were respectively honored with a certificate for their years of visits, loyalty, and love for the island of Aruba.

The honorary certification is presented on behalf of the Minister of Tourism as a token of appreciation and to say "Masha Danki" to guests who have visited Aruba 10, 20, or 35 years or more consecutively.

The three levels of honor are as follows:

Distinguished Visitor (10>years consecutively visiting Aruba)



Goodwill Ambassador (20>years consecutively visiting Aruba)
Emerald Ambassador (35>years consecutively visiting Aruba)

The honorees were:

Goodwill Ambassadors
Mr. Tim Walczak from Johnson City Tennessee, United States.

Ms. Jennifer Jensen from Johnson City Tennessee, United States.

Mr. Jorgino Willems representing the Aruba Tourism Authority, and staff members of Marriott's Aruba Surf Club bestowed the certificate upon the honorees, presented them with gifts, and thanked them

for choosing Aruba as their favorite vacation destination, as their home away from home.

The top reasons for returning to Aruba provided by the honorees were:

Aruba's people.
Aruba's beaches.
Aruba's weather.
Aruba's fabulous food.
"The beauty of the island"

On behalf of the Aruba Tourism Authority, we would like to express our sincere gratitude and appreciation to the honorees for their continued visits to the "One Happy Island". □



ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to

Aruba to me

portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your

vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for

promotional purposes without compensation. Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again. For today we received a lovely message from Rick Kubert, from Worcester Ma.

He wrote to us saying:

Home away from home is the ABC for the month of September for over thirty years. From Would not even think about going anywhere else! Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers! □

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LIV Casino at Barceló Aruba Introduces Exciting New Baccarat Electronic Table Games!

Oranjestad, Aruba – LIV Casino at Barceló Aruba is excited to announce the launch of our brand-new Baccarat electronic table games! This exciting addition brings a modern twist to the classic game, offering a unique and engaging experience for all players.

We warmly invite the local Asian community and all gaming enthusiasts to come and try out these state-of-the-art Baccarat tables. Whether you're an experienced player or new to the game, our Baccarat electronic tables promise endless excitement and the chance to win big!

Join us at LIV Casino and be among the first to experience this innovative way to play Baccarat in Aruba.

For more information, visit us at LIV Casino, Barceló Aruba. □



Exploring the Mainstreet of San Nicolas

SAN NICOLAS— At Just 11 miles southeast from Oranjestad you will enter the city San Nicolas, also known as Sunrise City or Chocolate City. A city that is rich in authentic culture and island charm. San Nicolas is Aruba's second largest city and was once a bustling company town dominated by the oil industry since the early 1930's.

Over the course of four decades, its demographics had changed immensely due to a stream of Afro-Caribbean and South American workers who came to fill the jobs in

the oil refinery between the 1920's until the 1960's. To this day traces of the multicultural influences in culinary offerings and customs, housing and population are clearly visible in San Nicolas - more than anywhere else on the island.

Flow of history

if you are looking for history San Nicolas has it. Here you will find three amazing museums, The Museum of Industry, the Community Museum and the Carnival Euphoria, all within walking distance from one another.

The Museum of Industry is situated in the Water Tower in San Nicolas and narrates Aruba's industrial history which began in the 19th century. Here you will learn about gold, aloe, phosphate, oil and the tourism industries which made San Nicolas once a bustling business center. Experience the touching stories of those who were part of this history.

Nicolaas Store built in 1940 and renovated in 2014 is the home of the Community Museum. The collection is remarkable and spans millennia. Ancient fossils stand next

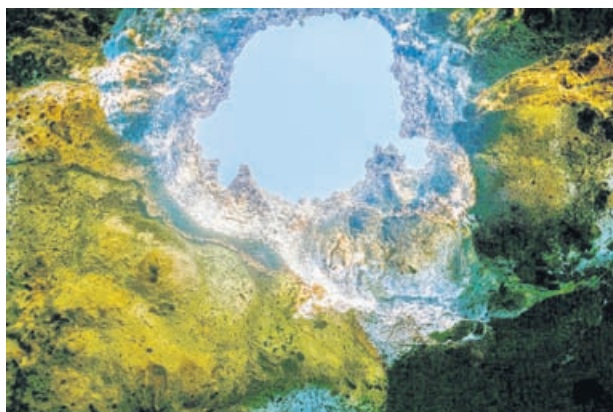
to tableaux of an authentically recreated colonial kitchen and bedroom and 19th-century barbershop, just to name a few of the items of old-time Aruba that has been preserved. A collection of artifacts and other objects of artistic, cultural, historical, or scientific importance can be found here for the purpose of education or enjoyment.

Carnival Euphoria is showcasing Aruba's Carnival. See how are Carnival has developed over the past 65 years. □

Today is going to be a good day

(Oranjestad)—Here's why: Aruba Today collected some things to do BEYOND the beach. Yes, we know. Aruba, located 15 miles north of Venezuela in the warm waters of the southern Caribbean, is home to beautiful white-sand beaches, 82-degree days, and thus ideal for the perfect beach day. But we are also blessed with some of the warmest people in the world and our island is 19.6 miles long and 6 miles across, with a total area of 70 square miles. Bit more to discover than the white stretch on the coastline we say. Let's mention some of these hidden gems.

Nature Calls



The Arikok National park is worth the ride. We love the hikes that are guided by the park's rangers whose job is to maintain trails and protect natural resources. The flora and fauna are beautiful and the historical sites tell you about the island's indigenous roots. The guided tours are even free of charge. If you are not up to walking, you can drive through the park, one way or another this park is a great place to spend an entire day. Cruising through the landscape you end up at some of the most stunning beaches like Dos Playa or Daimara Beach. In Total the park consists of 7907 acres protected nature with a richness of animals living in it. The Aruban whiptail lizard (cododo), Aruban cat eye snake (santanero) and endangered rattle snake (cascabel) are just some of them, you can also admire these close in the park's Visitors' Center. For more information, visit the website www.arubanationalpark.org

Philip's Animal Garden



To stay with the animals, let's hop to an amazing place. Something different to do, an experience that is to be enjoyed by people of all ages. Welcome to Philip's Animal Garden. We are not talking about a zoo here, this is actually a sanctuary for all types of creatures, from



horses to peacocks, kangaroos to turtles, monkeys, goats, and many, many more different species. The place was founded in 2009 and it is the only organization rescuing and rehabilitating exotic animals in Aruba, which has resulted in an amazing collection of these animals. They provide a suitable living environment for all the rescued animals. Up until now the owner, Philip, has built this shelter with his own efforts; building all the cages from scratch, designing all structures and welding them with his own bare hands. His goal is to upgrade the facilities to a world-class animal shelter with veterinary care and round-the-clock staffs. With the input from the Aruban community and visitors they provide the best care for these animals. Please check out their website for more information: www.philipsanimalgarden.com.

The Lighthouse



No, you would not think of this as a hidden gem. The California Lighthouse is actually one of the most known highlights in Aruba and many repeated guests most probably took the ride uphill already. But, there is a significant change to this tower. Since September 2016 you can climb the top. In 2015 Stichting Monumentenfonds started the restoration of the California Lighthouse. The project finished in September 2016 and the Lighthouse is now open for visitors to enjoy the beautiful view from the top. The construction of the California Lighthouse started in 1915. The name 'California' came from a vessel of the West India Company and Pacific Steamship Co. called 'California' that shipwrecked in the area in 1891. Therefore they came up with the idea of building a lighthouse that could indicate the island's eastern tip to ships with its light. www.arubalighthouse.com will give you more information.

Kayak in the Mangroves

Mangel Halto at Savaneta is definitely a place not to miss out on. The beautiful beach with the natural mangroves is simply a beauty, but if you



are into a more active way to enjoy the nature: take a kayak. While you are doing some workout -as it might get a little windy and rough-, you will see the island from a different perspective. You can even make a stop to do some snorkeling at the reef. Its fun, it's healthy and for sure something else. There are several companies that offer kayak tours, we had good experience with The Shack Kayak Tours Aruba, find them on Facebook.

Take an "off-road" sightseeing tour

A must-do activity on the island is for sure taking an off-road sightseeing tour. If you have a rented car, you can drive through the north-eastern side of Aruba and explore the natural pools, caves, rock formations and gorgeous view of the Atlantic Ocean. To access most of these sights, like the natural pool (Conchi) and the Guadirikiri and Fontein caves, you must enter through the Arikok National Park and buy a day pass. Then you drive up the rugged road that leads you through the white dunes, caves and along the wind turbines. Other locations, like the Ayo and Casibari Rock formation are situated more in the center of the island, and are free for guests, 24 hours a day.

Go for a shopping spree in the city center



Need a new bathing suit? Head to the city center of Oranjestad, where there is countless of different stores—both high end and more affordable—that can offer you the service you deserve! Local shopping stores often offer a more affordable price, and have a variety of clothes, shoes, bathing suites, purses and more. Along the Royal Plaza strip, there are numerous jewelry stores with great quality jewelry. In the Renaissance mall, you can shop high-end luxury brands, like Dolce & Gabbana, Kate Spade, Louis Vuitton and more.

Around the high-rise hotel area near Palm Beach, the Paseo Herencia Mall contain a variety of shopping stores, restaurants, small food stands and even a movie theater! ☐

The stories of “Compa Nanzi”

(Oranjestad)—The most popular character you may hear about in the Caribbean is Anansi, known locally on Aruba as “Compa Nanzi”. Local children grew up hearing the tales of the conniving spider, and his legacy forms part of the oral narrative tradition that is common in Aruba.

Although the stories are most popular in the Caribbean, “Compa Nanzi” is not entirely unknown globally, especially not in the West African region. Brought to the “new world” by enslaved Africans from Ghana, the historical thread of how Nanzi was introduced on Aruba follows the enslaved Africans in Curacao during the colonial era, which saw the biggest population of enslaved Africans in the Dutch Caribbean. The stories of Compa Nanzi were a sign of hope for freedom among the slaves, who passed around different stories involving the famous spider through word of mouth, due to not being able to express their native culture in the new world. These stories were a way to not only preserve their culture, but it acted as a medium for relief during the harsh treatment to which they were subjected to.

It wasn't until the end of the nineteenth century that the stories of Nanzi were written down in different languages. However, not all stories are completely alike in every country, as is the risk of oral story telling. However, one thing will always be dominant in Compa Nanzi's stories: his sneaky ways to get what he wants!

How Nanzi fooled the king
One day Nanzi was taking a stroll

near the castle of Shon Arei, the king. He had this sudden urge to walk in. He didn't think too much about it and committed to what he had in mind. It was a warm afternoon, and the castle personnel were taking their afternoon nap. Even the soldier guarding the castle door was fast asleep, snoring so loud that his beard bounced up and down on his chin. Nanzi just slipped past him, looked back for a moment then walk right on in. Nanzi stumbled upon the king's quarters. With all his excitement he sat in the king's throne, and put on his crown that was hanging on the side of the throne. It was very hot that day, and it wasn't long until Nanzi too fell asleep, right there on the king's throne. He was so deep in sleep and snoring so loud, that even when the king found him in his seat, Nanzi did not even notice. Shon Arei was flabbergasted by the sight of Nanzi on his throne, wearing his crown. How disrespectful! “Soldiers, get him!” he commanded. Nanzi was sound asleep, but when the soldiers picked him up, he jumped from fright. By then though, the soldier already had him in their hold.

“Put him in a sack, stitch it up and throw him in the ocean!” the king said furiously. Two soldiers immediately entered the chamber, took the crown off Nanzi's head and pushed him in a sack.

Nanzi was terrified; it looks like this time he won't get away with his schemes. To get to the ocean, the soldier walked a long distance, and where beginning to feel very thirsty. Luckily they passed by a pub, and decided to have a nice



cold beer. They set the sack with Nanzi in it outside and went to enjoy the refreshments. Nanzi was still trembling with fear in the sack.

What is that he hears? A herd of sheep walking by?

“Compadre, listen here!” Nanzi screamed as loud as he could. The sheep herder got close to the sack. “What is this?”

“Man, there is something very beautiful in here that you can see. It's very rare and strange, but indeed, there is something so beautiful in here that you've never seen or will ever see,” Nanzi told the herder.

The herder, very dumb, believed Nanzi's word. “Let me see!” he said.

“Well if you must insist,” Nanzi said, “I'll let you take a look, but only for a quick second.” The herder opened the sack, and Nanzi immediately jumped out. Before the herder could even take a look into the sack, Nanzi pushed him in it, and the herder fell head first in.

Nanzi didn't waste any time, and closed off the sack real tight. He then picked up the herder's hat and started walking behind the traveling sheep as if nothing happened. After a little while, the soldiers headed back outside to continue their journey. As they picked up the sack, the poor herder started screaming to let him out, but the soldiers ignored him, thinking it was Nanzi.

Shon Arei went strolling a while later. He thought to himself: “This time Nanzi could not get away with his foolishness. He probably drowned in that sack ages ago.” That is why, when he saw Nanzi walk behind the herd of sheep on the street, he was flabbergasted again. “Nanzi! Aren't you suppose to be at the bottom of the ocean floor?”

“I was, Your Majesty,” Nanzi replied. But you know what, there is so many things to see down there in the sack! Like this herd of sheep. Seeing that they had no herder, I started walking behind them and gained their trust pretty quickly. At the bottom of the ocean there are so many wonderful things, like diamonds, and bags of gold. Chests of silver and other precious stones,” Nanzi told the king.

“What is that you say?” the king was intrigued. “I want to see it too!”

The king immediately demanded to his soldiers to be put in a sack and be placed in the ocean. Naturally, Shon Arei died because of this. He was never found again. Nanzi followed the soldier back to the castle, where sat once again on the late king's throne and put his crown on. He took possession of all of Shon Arei's belongings, and lived the rest of his life as king. □

Story and pictures are from “Kon Nanzi a Nek Shon Arei (i otro kuentanan antiano di e araña sabi)” by Nilda Pinto.



CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

ACROSS

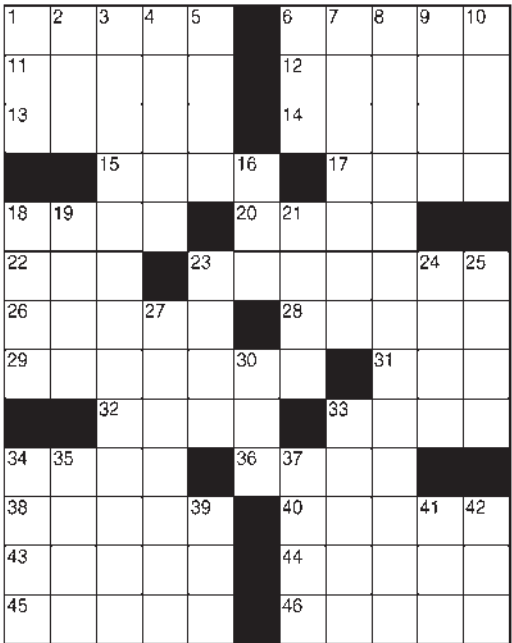
- 1 Betrayed nervousness
6 Accords
11 Texas mission
12 Isolated
13 Harrow blades
14 Historic riveter
15 Abound
17 Word on an octagon
18 Diamond corner
20 Makes a choice
22 Imitating
23 Meaty stew
26 Wanderer
28 Physicist Nikola
29 Yarns
31 Bit of wordplay
32 Lights-out tune
33 Table parts
34 Son of Zeus
36 Barking beast
38 Sewell of Dark City
40 Oklahoma city
43 Find darling
44 Sing like Bing
- 45 Floppy top
46 Convenient

DOWN

- 1 Knee protector
2 Boxing great
3 Chooses at the polls
4 Game host
5 Rx info
6 Hole number
7 John or Paul
8 Bewitches
9 Jazz combo
10 Dance unit
16 Barn sound
18 Lockup feature
19 Oodles
21 Places
23 Hold tightly
24 Wallop
25 Painter
27 Result of a mistake
30 Scrollwork shape
33 George W's wife
34 Swift horse
35 Uncivil
37 Make printing plates
39 Harden
41 Lawn material
42 One or more



Yesterday's answer



3-1

AXYDLBAAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

3-1 CRYPTOQUOTE

ETALX, VXCO RTKP TAC
FCGGUOF WBOF, WCG GXK
FABVUOF XBQAP NC PGABOF
GB PCG AUFXG PBEC VUOGAK
VABOF. — LTABWUOC ETK

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO ALL YOU LEAPLINGS BORN ON FEBRUARY 29! — FROM YOUR PUZZLE FRIENDS

Cruise ship Schedule: October 01 - 13 2024

			ARR	DEPT	BERTH	
TUE	01	CARNIVAL HORIZON	09.00	22.00	C	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
WED	02	RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS	09.00	21.00	C	1
THU	03	WORLD EXPLORER	08.00	23.59	C	1
SUN	06	FREEWINDS - DEPT.	****	22.15	E	-
TUE	08	CELEBRITY BEYOND	08.00	21.00	B	1
		CARNIVAL VISTA	13.00	23.00	I	1
		FREEWINDS	06.00	****	E	1
SUN	13	FREEWINDS - DEPT.	****	22.15	E	-

Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.

lets used on the island: type A with two flat prongs; type B with two flat and one grounding prong, and on occasion, type F with two round prong and two earth clips on the side. However, Type A is most commonly found in homes and establishments.

Supermarket hours



Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 9 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

Electrical power



Drinking water



The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

Safety



Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

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24/7



This Aug. 4, 2009, file photo shows the United States Chamber of Commerce building in Washington.

Associated Press

Almost all small businesses are using a software tool that is enabled by AI

By **MAE ANDERSON**
AP Business Writer

NEW YORK (AP) — As the use of artificial intelligence expands, more small firms say they're harnessing AI to help their businesses. In a survey by The U.S. Chamber of Commerce and Teneo, nearly every small business 98% said they are utilizing a tool that is enabled by AI. Forty percent said they're using generative AI tools like chatbots and image creation, nearly double from last year's survey. Small business owners say finding the right AI tools helps

them save on personnel costs and frees up time. But they also stress that human oversight is still a necessity. "AI allows small businesses who many times do not have the staff or resources of their competitors to punch above their weight," said Jordan Crenshaw, senior vice president of the U.S. Chamber's Technology Engagement Center. "It's encouraging to see small businesses embrace technology and express optimism for the future as these platforms serve as a catalyst for innovation and resilience." □

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Meghann Fahy and Eve Hewson's 'overnight success' is more than a decade in the making

By **ALICIA RANCILIO**

Associated Press

Meghann Fahy and Eve Hewson, two of the stars of Netflix's whodunit "The Perfect Couple," have news for you if you want to call them breakouts: They've been working in this business for more than a decade.

Fahy made her TV debut in 2009 in an episode of "Gossip Girl." Hewson's first big film role was in 2011's "This Must Be the Place." They do concede, however, that it's recent TV roles "The White Lotus" for Fahy and "Bad Sisters" for Hewson that have led to new frontiers of opportunity.

Susanne Bier, who directed "The Perfect Couple," says both Fahy and Hewson are "going to be big stars."

"They certainly have proper, profound star quality. Both of them in very different ways," Bier says. "Both are incredibly creative, incredibly smart, and also have a impressive insight as to who they are. You can be a great actor or actress and not necessarily really know who you are yourself. And they do."

Hewson, 33, whose dad is U2 front man Bono, may have grown up in a famous family but she's now in demand in her own right. She will next be seen in a second season of "Bad Sisters," out in November. She's in Noah Baumbach's next film, alongside Adam Sandler, George Clooney and Riley Keough. She's also been



Meghann Fahy, left, and Eve Hewson pose for a portrait to promote "The Perfect Couple" on Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024, in Los Angeles.

Associated Press

cast in Steven Spielberg's next production and is set to star opposite Murray Bartlett in a racing series for Hulu.

Fahy, 34, is in production on a limited series with Julianne Moore and Milly Alcock called "Sirens," written by Molly Smith Metzler ("Maid") for Netflix. She also has two films in the can with Josh O'Connor ("The Crown," "Challengers") and Brandon Sklenar ("It Ends With Us"). The two actors spoke candidly with The Associated Press about this phase of their careers. This interview has been condensed for clarity and brevity.

AP: You've both had popular, zeitgeisty TV shows in recent years. TV fans are par-

ticularly passionate. Have you experienced any interesting interactions with fans?

HEWSON: It's actually really fun to experience because even when we were in Cape Cod shooting "The Perfect Couple," I would go to the local shop to get my groceries and little old ladies would follow me down the aisle and be like, "Excuse me. Are you that girl from that 'Sisters' show?" Who knew that they were watching it? It doesn't change my life, so it doesn't bother me, but when someone comes up to me and says that they love the show, especially when it's someone unexpected, I'm like, "Oh, cool."

FAHY: It's not happening so

much to me that it feels like a huge imposition or anything. I feel like I've been really lucky. A lot of the people that I've met who have been a fan of "The White Lotus," or whatever, they're really sweet people. And, I think, part of why we do this is because we want to tell stories that people can connect to and play out scenarios for themselves. So I think it's always really nice.

AP: What's it like to now be a part of conversations about whom to watch?

FAHY: Part of it feels really nice because you work really, really, really hard for a really long time maybe that's not how it happens for a lot of people but I feel like

we've both been doing this for a minute. So, of course, it feels really good. but I try not to like dwell on any of it. I try to acknowledge it and be like, "Oh, that's so nice." And then just kind of keep going.

HEWSON: You hear so many stories of people who were like, "I walked into my first audition and I just became a star." Or, there's this element of being an actor where people don't want to tell you how hard they work. They want it to look like it's really easy. But we've been doing this for a long time. People just don't really tell those stories. It's usually about the one that was found on the street.

FAHY: Yeah. You took 15 years to become an overnight success.

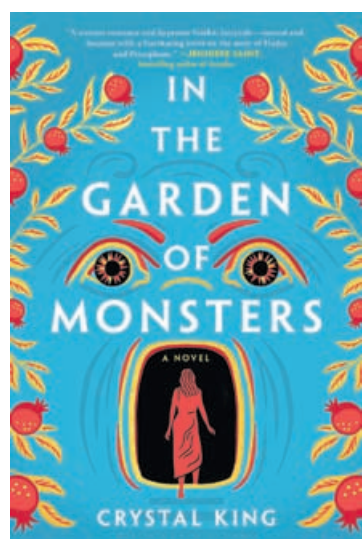
AP: Do you notice you're now treated differently by people in the industry?

FAHY: Yeah, but I always think that nobody ever knows who I am. It's always very embarrassing. I embarrass myself in those moments.

I don't always feel like I fit in those rooms.

HEWSON: What's nice is, I've spent so long going into a room and people just being like, "OK," and act like they're just not getting it. I know at least like I have work that people understand, what I'm doing a little bit more so they get me as an actor.

FAHY: It's like a different level of respect. □



This cover image released by Mira shows "In the Garden of Monsters" by Crystal King.
Associated Press

Crystal King combines food, myths and surrealism with 'In the Garden of Monsters'

By **DONNA EDWARDS**

Associated Press

Salvador Dali hires a young artist with a striking similarity to the goddess Proserpina to model for him in the Sacro Bosco, a mystical garden almost as surreal as Dali himself. But the beautiful Julia Lombardi quickly finds there's more tying her to the gods of Greek and Roman myths than just her looks. "In the Garden of Monsters" is a Gothic reimagining of the Persephone myth set in Italy shortly after WWII and written delectably by Crystal King, who flexes her historical research and mouthwatering food writing skills.

And when I say mouthwatering, I mean it. King takes full advantage of the pomegranate's role in the story to craft amazing meals, inspired in part by Dali himself.

The novel is a confluence of art and surrealism, mythol-

ogy and modernity, ghosts and monsters, sex and romance, history and mystery that's as surprising and satisfying as the astounding flavor combinations in the dishes described within.

As soon as Julia arrives at the castle near the Sacro Bosco along with Dali; his wife, Gala; a young Italian man to take photographs; and a strapping American to tote around the painting supplies, otherworldly things start happening. And the whole place is somewhat disquieting, what with the unnaturally blank servants and an uncanny glow that sometimes emanates from the garden below.

But their host, the exceedingly handsome Ignazio, is unmistakably familiar to Julia. His hot touch and lingering odor of smoke and cinnamon are equally comforting and unnerving. □

The Presidents Cup needs time more than an International victory

By DOUG FERGUSON

AP Golf Writer

MONTREAL (AP) — The Presidents Cup still has a long way to go before it can be declared a hopeless cause.

Yes, the Americans have a 12-1-1 advantage in the matches against an International team that only four years ago began to develop a true identity. They are going for their 10th straight win this week at Royal Montreal. That's still not even a record among such team competitions in golf. The United States won 13 in a row in the Curtis Cup and 12 straight in the Walker Cup.

Long ago, the Ryder Cup was equally lopsided, mainly due to Britain trying to rebuild after World War II. In the first 25 matches against Great Britain and Ireland (1927-1983), the Americans led 21-3-1.

So give the latest iteration of team matches some time. Because while the Presidents Cup has been relatively predictable over the last two decades, the competition hasn't suffered.

Tiger Woods shed light on this when he made his Presidents Cup debut at Royal Melbourne in 1998. He had won 36 consecutive matches in the U.S. Junior Amateur and the U.S. Amateur, a record that might be as untouchable as his 142 consecutive



United States team members Scottie Scheffler, left, and Collin Morikawa walk the fairway on the third hole during practice at the Presidents Cup golf tournament at the Royal Montreal Golf Club in Montreal, Tuesday, Sept. 24, 2024.

Associated Press

cuts made on the PGA Tour. He was asked that week the difference between match play as an amateur and a professional.

"The field," Woods replied. The International team had no one in the top 10 of the world ranking and only two players in the top 20 for the 2019 matches at Royal Melbourne. The Americans countered with 10 players in the top 20. The Americans still had to stage a huge rally in singles on the final

day to win. Then there was South Korea in 2015 when the Presidents Cup was decided by two putts in one match. Chris Kirk made from 15 feet, Anirban Lahiri of India missed from 4 feet.

An argument can be made the Presidents Cup has been more competitive than the Ryder Cup. The last five editions of the Ryder Cup have been decided by five points or more. Not since Medinah in 2012 has the outcome seriously been in question on

Sunday.

That's not to suggest the Presidents Cup can ever match the Ryder Cup in heritage and hype, and probably not in passion. The Ryder Cup is between two tours, and even now as most Europeans are PGA Tour members and U.S. residents, there is a lot of pride and even more bragging rights.

Europe, which joined the Ryder Cup in 1979, also had Seve Ballesteros. The late Spaniard might be singularly

responsible for the matches being what they are today. Players with charisma like Ballesteros are hard to find anywhere in the world.

The biggest obstacle is the PGA Tour owns the Presidents Cup both teams which is why no one who defected to Saudi-backed LIV Golf is allowed to play.

The tour created these matches in 1994 when the International stars (from everywhere but Europe) who ruled golf Greg Norman, Nick Price, Vijay Singh and a 24-year-old South African stud named Ernie Els had no cup to play.

Royal Melbourne in 2019 might be looked upon as turning point in the Presidents Cup. Els was the captain and determined to give the Internationals their own identity. So he created a new logo, a combination of shields and badges culled from history that represented unity and loyalty, friendship, strength and fight. The colors are black and gold.

Even then, the PGA Tour had to approve of the new logo. There's still no getting around two teams with the same owner. Imagine if the Internationals win this week in Montreal. Where would they display the trophy?

But the competition is fine, and it only looks otherwise based on outcomes. □

Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz are on Spain's roster for the Davis Cup Finals

MALAGA, Spain (AP) — Rafael Nadal and Carlos Alcaraz were named to Spain's roster for the Davis Cup Finals on Monday, raising the possibility of a renewal of their "Nadalcaraz" doubles partnership from the Paris Olympics.

Nadal, a 22-time Grand Slam champion who is 38, hasn't competed anywhere since the Paris Games, where he lost in the second round of singles to longtime rival Novak Djokovic and paired with Alcaraz to get to the quarterfinals of men's doubles before exiting against Americans Austin Krajicek and Rajeev Ram.

Nadal then withdrew from the U.S. Open and the Laver Cup while still dealing with health issues that have limited him to competing only sparingly over the past two seasons. Alcaraz earned the men's singles titles at the French Open in June and Wimbledon in July to raise his career total to four at the age of 21.

Spain will take on the Netherlands in the

quarterfinal round of the Davis Cup Finals, an eight-team event Nov. 19-24 in Malaga, Spain.

The other opening matchups are: defending champion Italy vs. Argentina; the United States vs. Australia; and Germany vs. Canada.

Italy will be led by No. 1-ranked Jannik Sinner, who won the Australian Open in January and the U.S. Open this month. The Italian roster also includes Lorenzo Musetti, a semifinalist at Wimbledon and bronze medalist at the Olympics.

The U.S. roster features Taylor Fritz, the runner-up to Sinner at Flushing Meadows, along with past major semifinalists Tommy Paul and Ben Shelton, plus doubles specialists Krajicek and Ram.

The Italy-Argentina winner will face the U.S.-Australia winner in the semifinals, with the winners of Germany-Canada and Netherlands-Spain meeting in the other semifinal. □



Rafael Nadal reacts waves after the men's doubles quarter-final tennis competition at the Roland Garros stadium, at the 2024 Summer Olympics, July 31, 2024, in Paris, France.

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How hard is it to repeat as World Series champ? Texas just made it 24 seasons in a row without one

By **STEPHEN HAWKINS**

AP Baseball Writer

ARLINGTON, Texas (AP) —

This is the 24th season in a row that there will not be a repeat World Series champion, and Bruce Bochy knows firsthand how hard it is trying to win back-to-back titles — or even getting back to the playoffs the following season.

"I should know because I'm 0 for 4," said Bochy, who is wrapping up his 27th season as a big league manager. "I'll say it again, you start with how difficult it is to win a world championship. It's really hard to do. To repeat that, a lot has to happen."

Bochy and the reigning champion Texas Rangers won't even be in the playoffs. They will finish with a losing record a year after the franchise's first World Series title.

The New York Yankees were the last team to win consecutive championships, three in a row from 1998-2000. Derek Jeter, Mariano Rivera and the Bronx Bombers even made it back to the Fall Classic in 2001 when Arizona had a walk-off win in the deciding Game 7.

Only five teams have played in back-to-back World Series since then. The best championship run was that of the San Francisco Giants, who won three titles over five seasons (2010, 2012 and 2014) when Bochy was their manager. They also missed the postseason the following year each time.

Bochy had been retired for three years when the Rangers hired him and immediately won the World Series following six consecutive losing seasons.

Playoff format and mo-



New York Yankees first baseman Tino Martinez (24) jumps into the arms of pitcher Mariano Rivera as catcher Jorge Posada, third from right, Scott Brosius (18) and others celebrate after defeating the New York Mets in Game 5 of the World Series 4-2 to become the 2000 World Series Champions, Oct. 26, 2000, at New York's Shea Stadium.

Associated Press

mentum

After making the World Series in 2017 and 2018, the Los Angeles Dodgers finally ended a 32-year title drought by winning it all during the pandemic-shortened 2020 season.

"Baseball is the most random championship to capture," Dodgers manager Dave Roberts said. "It is not always about the best roster, it is about the team that gets the hottest, clearly. ... The best teams, in theory, aren't always hoisting that trophy. That's by design, as far as the playoff format."

Only 12 of 30 teams make the playoffs since the field was expanded from 10 in 2022 with the addition of a third wild card in each league. The wild card became a best-of-three series instead of a single game,

and the two top-seeded teams get a bye with a nearly week-long gap between games not necessarily an advantage after the daily routine of a 162-game regular season.

Atlanta won the World Series in 2021, a year after losing to Los Angeles in Game 7 of the NL Championship Series. The Braves and the Dodgers were the National League's top two seeds with byes the past two seasons and both lost in the division series each time.

"The five days off we've had the last two years is not conducive to keeping things going," Braves manager Brian Snitker said. "It is a tough thing to do. It is hard to win one obviously, but to back it up ... I looked at '20 and how close we were to having an oppor-

tunity to play in the World Series because I really liked our club then. We were a homer away from pulling that off."

In other leagues

There have been multiple repeat champions in the NFL, NBA and NHL since that run by the Yankees nearly a quarter-century ago.

The Kansas City Chiefs are trying this season to be the first to win three consecutive Super Bowls. New England went back-to-back in 2004-05. The NFL sends 14 of its 32 teams to the playoffs, 44% of the total and more than MLB (40%).

Half the NHL's 32 teams make the playoffs, a two-month grind to determine the Stanley Cup champion. Including the NBA's play-in tournament, two-thirds of

those teams (20 of 30) are involved in a postseason that is essentially the same length as hockey.

Missing playoffs, multiple titles

There have been 16 different teams win titles since the Yankees' dominating stretch, and five others have played in the Fall Classic.

The only managers other Bochy with multiple titles since 2001 are Tony La Russa (St. Louis in 2006 and 2011) and Terry Francona (Boston in 2004 and 2007). Houston is the only other team to win more than once, with A.J. Hinch in 2017 and Dusty Baker two years ago.

The Rangers are the 12th team since 2003 to miss the playoffs the year after being World Series champs. Texas has been in third place in the AL West since June 21, and below .500 a month longer than that in a season filled with injuries to the likes of Josh Jung, Evan Carter and World Series MVP shortstop Corey Seager and offensive struggles. Texas is scoring about 4.2 runs a game after averaging nearly 5 1/2 last season. ALCS MVP Adolis García isn't close to the 39 homers and 107 RBIs he had last year, leadoff hitter Marcus Semien is about 40 points below the .276 batting average he had and switch-hitting catcher Jonah Heim didn't repeat his impressive offensive production.

"We just had to deal with some things this year that we couldn't quite overcome," Bochy said. "Every season takes a life of its own. We got the injuries (and) just our play too wasn't quite as good, and we have to be honest about that." □